

DOCKET NO. D-1975-016 CP-4

DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

**Borough of Ambler
Wastewater Treatment Plant
Upper Dublin Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania**

PROCEEDINGS

This docket is issued in response to an Application submitted to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC or Commission) by Environmental Engineering and Management Associates, Inc. on behalf of the Borough of Ambler on June 29, 2015 (Application), for renewal of the docket holder's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and its discharge. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. PA0026603 for the project discharge was issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) on June 15, 2011.

The Application was reviewed for continuation of the project in the Comprehensive Plan and approval under Section 3.8 of the *Delaware River Basin Compact*. The Montgomery County Planning Commission has been notified of pending action. A public hearing on this project was held by the DRBC on August 10, 2016.

A. DESCRIPTION

- 1. Purpose.** The purpose of this docket is to renew the approval of the docket holder's existing 8.0 million gallons per day (mgd) WWTP and its discharge. The WWTP has an average annual flow of 6.5 mgd.
- 2. Location.** The project WWTP will continue to discharge treated effluent to Wissahickon Creek, a tributary to the Schuylkill River, at River Mile 92.5 – 12.8 – 12.7 (Delaware River – Schuylkill River – Wissahickon Creek) via Outfall No. 001, in Upper Dublin Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania as follows:

OUTFALL NO.	LATITUDE (N)	LONGITUDE (W)
001	40° 08' 38"	75° 13' 03"

- 3. Area Served.** The Borough of Ambler WWTP will continue to serve the Borough of Ambler and portions of Lower Gwynedd, Upper Dublin, Whitmarsh, Whitpain and Montgomery Townships, all in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania as delineated on maps that were part of the Application. For the purpose of defining the Area Served, Section B (Type of Discharge) and D (Service Area) of the docket holder's Application are incorporated herein by

reference, to the extent consistent with all other conditions contained in the DECISION Section of this docket.

4. Physical Features.

a. Design Criteria. The docket holder will continue to operate its existing WWTP. The hydraulic design capacity of the WWTP is 8.0 mgd and the average annual flow of the WWTP is 6.5 mgd. The docket holder is requesting a docket renewal with no increase in flow.

b. Facilities. The Ambler WWTP treatment processes consist of fine screening, grit removal, primary clarification, plastic media trickling filters, secondary clarification, attached growth nitrification, enhanced clarification with dissolved air flotation (DAF), UV disinfection and cascade aeration.

The project facilities are located in the vicinity of the flood hazard area (100-year flood zone). The existing tankage and facilities located in the flood hazard area are flood-proofed up to the flood hazard protection elevation (100-year flood elevation plus one foot). This is accomplished by the tops of the tanks being at least one foot above the 100-year flood elevation.

Wasted sludge will continue to be hauled off-site by a licensed hauler for disposal at a state-approved facility.

c. Water withdrawals. The potable water supply in the project service area is supplied by the docket holder. The groundwater withdrawal is described in detail in Docket No. D-1985-026 CP-5, which was approved by the Commission on March 3, 2010.

d. NPDES Permit / DRBC Docket. NPDES Permit No. PA0026603 was issued by the PADEP on June 15, 2011 and includes final effluent limitations for the project discharge of 6.5 mgd to surface waters classified by the PADEP as Warm Water Fishes (WWF) and Migratory Fishes (MF). The following average monthly effluent limits are among those listed in the NPDES Permit and meet or are more stringent than the effluent requirements of the DRBC.

EFFLUENT TABLE A-1: DRBC Parameters Included in NPDES Permit

OUTFALL 001 (Discharge to Wissahickon Creek)		
PARAMETER	LIMIT	MONITORING
pH (Standard Units)	6 to 9 at all times	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Suspended Solids	30 mg/l	As required by NPDES Permit
CBOD5 (5-1 to 10-31)	10 mg/l (85% minimum removal*)	As required by NPDES Permit
(11-1 to 4-30)	20 mg/l (85% minimum removal*)	
Ammonia Nitrogen (5-1 to 10-31)	1.5 mg/l	As required by NPDES Permit
(11-1 to 4-30)	4.5 mg/l	
Fecal Coliform	200 colonies per 100 ml as a geo. avg.	As required by NPDES Permit
Total Dissolved Solids**	1,000 mg/l	As required by NPDES permit

* DRBC Requirement

** See DECISION Condition C.II.q.

e. **Cost.** There are no construction costs associated with this WWTP renewal.

f. **Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan.** The docket holder previously operated two facilities – the North and South Ambler WWTPs. Those facilities were included in the Comprehensive Plan Addendum #1, Section VII – Pre-existing Projects, adopted July 25, 1963. Additional treatment facilities at the South WWTP were added to the Comprehensive Plan by Docket No. D-1968-049 CP, approved on May 22, 1968. Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-1 approved the abandonment of the North WWTP and the expansion of the South WWTP to 6.5 mgd on January 12, 1977. The project WWTP hydraulic re-rate from 6.5 mgd to 8.0 mgd was previously included in the Comprehensive Plan by DRBC Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-2 on March 12, 2008. The project WWTP was continued by DRBC Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-3 on July 13, 2011. Issuance of this docket will continue the discharge project in the Comprehensive Plan.

B. **FINDINGS**

The docket holder has requested a renewal of the Ambler Borough WWTP, with an average annual flow 6.5 mgd, and a hydraulic capacity of 8.0 mgd.

Near the docket holder's WWTP discharge, Wissahickon Creek has an estimated seven-day low flow with a recurrence interval of ten years (Q_{7-10}) of 3.54 mgd (5.48 cfs). The ratio of this low flow to the average design wastewater discharge (6.5 mgd / 10.06 cfs) from the Ambler WWTP is 0.55 to 1.

The nearest surface water intake of record for public water supply downstream of the project discharge is operated by Philadelphia Water Department on the Schuylkill River approximately 13 river miles away.

The project does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and is designed to prevent substantial adverse impact on the water resources related environment, while sustaining the current and future water uses and development of the water resources of the Basin.

The limits in the NPDES Permit are in compliance with Commission effluent quality requirements, where applicable.

The project is designed to produce a discharge meeting the effluent requirements as set forth in the Commission's *WQR*.

C. **DECISION**

I. Effective on the approval date for Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-4 below:

a. The project described in Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-3 is removed from the Comprehensive Plan to the extent that it is not included in Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-4; and

b. Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-3 is terminated and replaced by Docket No. D-1975-016 CP-4; and

c. The project and the appurtenant facilities described in Section A “Physical Features” of this docket shall be added to the Comprehensive Plan.

II. The project and appurtenant facilities as described in Section A “Physical Features” of this docket are approved pursuant to Section 3.8 of the *Compact*, subject to the following conditions:

a. Docket approval is subject to all conditions, requirements, and limitations imposed by the PADEP in its NPDES WQM Permits, and such conditions, requirements, and limitations are incorporated herein, unless they are less stringent than the Commission’s.

b. The facility and operational records shall be available at all times for inspection by the DRBC.

c. The facility shall be operated at all times to comply with the requirements of the Commission’s *WQR* and Flood Plain Regulations (*FPR*).

d. The docket holder shall comply with the requirements contained in the EFFLUENT TABLES in Section A.4.d. of this docket. The docket holder shall submit the required monitoring results electronically to the DRBC Project Review Section via email aemr@drbc.state.nj.us on the **Annual Effluent Monitoring Report Form** located at this web address: <http://www.state.nj.us/drbc/programs/project/application/index.html>. The monitoring results shall be submitted annually, absent any observed limit violations, by January 31. If a DRBC effluent limit is violated, the docket holder shall submit the result(s) to the DRBC within 30 days of the violation(s) and provide a written explanation that states the action(s) the docket holder has taken to correct the violation(s) and protect against any future violations.

e. Except as otherwise authorized by this docket, if the docket holder seeks relief from any limitation based upon a DRBC water quality standard or minimum treatment requirement, the docket holder shall apply for approval from the Executive Director or for a docket revision in accordance with Section 3.8 of the *Compact* and the *Rules of Practice and Procedure*.

f. If at any time the receiving treatment plant proves unable to produce an effluent that is consistent with the requirements of this docket approval, no further connections shall be permitted until the deficiency is remedied.

g. Nothing herein shall be construed to exempt the docket holder from obtaining all necessary permits and/or approvals from other State, Federal or local government agencies having jurisdiction over this project.

h. The docket holder is permitted to treat and discharge wastewaters as set forth in the Area Served Section of this docket, which incorporates by reference Sections B (Type of Discharge) and D (Service Area) of the docket holder's Application to the extent consistent with all other conditions of this DECISION Section.

i. The docket holder shall make wastewater discharge in such a manner as to avoid injury or damage to fish or wildlife and shall avoid any injury to public or private property.

j. No sewer service connections shall be made to newly constructed premises with plumbing fixtures and fittings that do not comply with water conservation performance standards contained in Resolution No. 88-2 (Revision 2).

k. Nothing in this docket approval shall be construed as limiting the authority of DRBC to adopt and apply charges or other fees to this discharge or project.

l. The issuance of this docket approval shall not create any private or proprietary rights in the waters of the Basin, and the Commission reserves the right to amend, suspend or rescind the docket for cause, in order to ensure proper control, use and management of the water resources of the Basin.

m. Unless an extension is requested and approved by the Commission in advance, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Commission's Project Review Fee schedule (Resolution No. 2009-2), the docket holder is responsible for timely submittal of a docket renewal application on the appropriate DRBC application form at least 12 months in advance of the docket expiration date set forth below. The docket holder will be subject to late charges in the event of untimely submittal of its renewal application, whether or not DRBC issues a reminder notice in advance of the deadline or the docket holder receives such notice. In the event that a timely and complete application for renewal has been submitted and the DRBC is unable, through no fault of the docket holder, to reissue the docket before the expiration date below (or the later date established by an extension that has been timely requested and approved), the terms and conditions of the current docket will remain fully effective and enforceable against the docket holder pending the grant or denial of the application for docket approval.

n. The Executive Director may modify or suspend this approval or any condition thereof, or require mitigating measures pending additional review, if in the Executive Director's judgment such modification or suspension is required to protect the water resources of the Basin.

o. Any person who objects to a docket decision by the Commission may request a hearing in accordance with Article 6 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure. In accordance with Section 15.1(p) of the *Delaware River Basin Compact*, cases and controversies arising under the *Compact* are reviewable in the United States district courts.

p. The docket holder may request of the Executive Director in writing the substitution of specific conductance for TDS. The request should include information that supports the effluent specific correlation between TDS and specific conductance. Upon review,

the Executive Director may modify the docket to allow the substitution of specific conductance for TDS monitoring.

q. The docket holder is prohibited from treating/pre-treating any hydraulic fracturing wastewater from sources in or out of the Basin at this time. Should the docket holder wish to treat/pre-treat hydraulic fracturing wastewater in the future, the docket holder will need to first apply to the Commission to renew this docket and be issued a revised docket allowing such treatment and an expanded service area. Failure to obtain this approval prior to treatment/pre-treatment will result in action by the Commission.

BY THE COMMISSION

DATE APPROVED: September 14, 2016

EXPIRATION DATE: September 14, 2021